



National Infrastructure Protection Center NIPC Daily Open Source Report for 20 February 2003

Current Nationwide
Threat Level is



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www.whitehouse.gov/homeland

Daily Overview

- Reuters reports retail gasoline prices in the United States have passed \$2 a gallon in some major cities. (See item [1](#))
- The Washington Times reports a cargo of several tons of a chemical that can be used as a precursor to nerve gas was recently delivered to North Korea. (See item [6](#))
- The Washington Post reports CSX Transportation, a major Eastern freight railroad whose tracks are used by many commuter and Amtrak passenger trains, was largely shut down in the Mid-Atlantic region by the weekend snowstorm. (See item [12](#))
- News Channel 5 reports the Red Cross says mysterious white, fibrous, clumpy material has turned up in seven units of central Ohio blood, which has thus been discarded. (See item [21](#))
- Government Computer News reports the newly formed multistate Information Sharing and Analysis Center will pool cyberthreat data gathered by states as well as commercial sectors such as banking, public utilities and IT. (See item [26](#))

NIPC Update Fast Jump

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: High, Cyber: High

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://esisac.com>]

1. **February 19, Reuters** — Gas pump prices top the \$2-a-gallon mark. Retail gasoline prices in the United States have breached \$2 a gallon in some major cities as domestic fuel supplies drop sharply and fears abound over potential war on oil supplier Iraq. The

average retail price for regular gasoline in San Francisco was \$2.044 a gallon on Wednesday, while premium grades in cities like Los Angeles and Oakland were also above \$2, according to the American Automobile Association. The high fuel costs recall the sharp retail gasoline spike of the spring of 2001, when pump prices hit a nationwide record-high of \$1.72 a gallon, and cities all over the West Coast and Midwest surged over \$2 a gallon. Prices for gasoline are expected to continue to rise as spring approaches, potentially breaking new records, as driving demand traditionally picks up steam with more pleasant weather and pressures inventories. **The fuel crunch, which is dealing a blow to consumers' pocketbooks and threatening the nation's economic recovery, highlights a need for the U.S. to become more independent from unreliable foreign oil supplies, the American Petroleum Institute (API) said on Wednesday.** Pump prices have risen along with higher crude oil costs, but some groups believe that fuel prices have risen higher than can be justified, setting off demands for an investigation by Federal Trade Commission. Crude oil prices, which account for 40 percent of the price of gasoline, are up near two-year highs around \$37 a barrel as U.S. inventories dropped to 27-year lows following supply disruptions from Venezuela and fears that a U.S.-led war with Iraq would disrupt Mideast supplies. **However, Democratic Sen. Charles Schumer of New York on Sunday accused oil companies of gouging consumers at the pump, arguing that gasoline prices have risen faster than crude costs. The lawmaker asked the Federal Trade Commission to investigate the matter.**

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A31006-2003Feb 19.html>

2. *February 19, The Charleston Gazette* — **Storm Leaves 100,000 West Virginians without Power. Power companies called in crews from out of state Monday to restore service after a weekend storm knocked out electricity to more than 100,000 customers across West Virginia.** Spokesmen from American Electric Power and Allegheny Power said ice was the primary cause of the outages, which were concentrated in a band that stretched east from Mason County to Webster County. Allegheny spokesman Allen Staggers said power might not be fully restored to Allegheny customers until midnight Friday. At AEP, which had 60,000 customers without electricity at midday, Phil Moyer estimated that the problems might be fixed by Thursday. "This storm was different from the rest in that we were dealing with rain, sleet, snow and ice in the same day, but the ice caused the most problems," Moyer said. As of 4 p.m., AEP listed 22,500 customers without power in the Point Pleasant area, 11,400 in Jackson County, 6,800 in the Milton area and 5,600 in greater Kanawha County. AEP is replacing dozens of broken poles, he said, "more than we'd like." AEP has brought in crews from Virginia, Tennessee, Indiana and Ohio to help, he said. "We're also having trouble with our transmission lines — the higher-voltage lines that carry power to larger numbers of people. A well-filled freezer will keep food frozen for up to 72 hours in an outage.

Source: http://www.energycentral.com/sections/news/nw_article.cfm?id=3656907

3. *February 19, Reuters* — **US Midwest utilities cut storm outages to 100,000. As of Wednesday afternoon, American Electric Power Co. had turned the lights back on for about half of the 130,000 homes and businesses in Ohio, Kentucky and West Virginia who lost electricity during the three-day storm.** AEP had 66,000 customers to go, with a majority expected to be reconnected to the grid by Friday night and the rest on the weekend, said spokeswoman Melissa McHenry. Kentucky utility LG&E Energy said about 32,000 of its customers were still without electricity.

Source: http://www.energycentral.com/sections/news/nw_article.cfm?id=3656972

4. *February 12, Reuters* — **U.S. power sector faces huge debt in 2003. The U.S. power sector, loaded with a mountain of debt after a massive building spree during the past five years, faces a painful restructuring as the bills come due, affecting not just generators but also lenders, industry analysts say.** During the heyday of electric deregulation in the late 1990s, energy companies borrowed about \$500 billion to expand their businesses and build natural gas-fired power plants. With almost \$20 billion due to be paid off or refinanced in 2003, the industry is struggling with an oversupply of generation that has depressed wholesale power prices and further weakened the finances of merchant generators, according to a study by the Fitch credit rating agency. **Because of the heavy debt load, low power prices and expensive natural gas, many new power plants are not returning any cash to their builders, and some are not even generating enough revenue to cover monthly debt payments.** "The problems are not yet over for the power sector because of the massive debt bubble that needs to be fixed to restore investor confidence in the sector," said Karl Miller, of Miller, McConville & Co., a private firm recently put together by former energy executives and investment bankers seeking to buy distressed generating and natural gas assets. Many distressed power companies from across the country have resorted to selling assets and taking high interest loans to survive. But such short-term measures will not solve the current problems.

Source: http://www.energycentral.com/sections/news/nw_article.cfm?id=3640882

5. *February 10, Electricity Daily* — **Will gas shortage trump new power plant plans?** High natural gas prices are causing large industrial consumers to complain to Congress about gas-fired power plants. Two trade groups have sent letters to congressional energy leaders suggesting there may not be enough gas to go around, and coal is a viable option for power generation. Privately, some industrial groups are even discussing proposing a moratorium on new gas-fired generation. **The American Chemistry Council (ACC) represents most large chemical firms, which use gas as a feedstock as well as for energy. ACC writes that "as the largest industrial consumer of natural gas in the United States, the business of chemistry has been severely affected by the steep increases in natural gas prices. In fact, future prices for natural gas are currently up more than 130 percent from last year and are the highest since April 2001. Most experts believe that these increases are driven by increased demand for natural gas and falling levels of domestic production. Faced with these trends, it is now more important than ever that Congress look for ways to promote abundant and diversified sources of domestic energy, including natural gas, coal, oil, nuclear and cost-competitive renewable resources."** The ACC is even more pointed, saying, "Our nation must rely on its natural resource strengths. Certainly our most obvious natural resource strength is abundant coal. Congress and the administration must advance development of electric power production from clean coal technologies. We cannot, as a nation, walk away from such an obvious choice for energy self-reliance and should take all reasonable measures to advance its use."

Source: http://www.energycentral.com/sections/news/nw_article.cfm?id=3637723

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Chemical Sector

6.

February 18, Washington Times — Gas chemical shipped to N. Korea. A cargo of several tons of a chemical that can be used as a precursor to nerve gas was delivered to North Korea recently aboard the same ship that was intercepted last December hauling Scud missiles to Yemen, the Washington Times said Tuesday. Intelligence sources said the shipment of sodium cyanide arrived in the North Korean port of Nampo last week aboard the freighter Sosan, which had been stopped in the Indian Ocean by U.S. and Spanish warships as it sailed for Yemen with 15 missiles and warheads. The Sosan was allowed to continue its voyage with its cargo intact after U.S. officials determined that the Yemeni government had legally purchased the Scuds. **After unloading in Yemen, the Sosan picked up the sodium cyanide in Germany and was tracked by U.S. intelligence services as it sailed back to North Korea, the Times said. Sodium cyanide is a toxic chemical that has a number of industrial uses, but is also a precursor to sarin, the lethal gas that was used in 1995 by the Aum Shinrikyo doomsday cult to kill a dozen commuters in the Tokyo subway system. While there is no evidence the sodium cyanide was destined for North Korea's military, western intelligence believes Pyongyang has a chemical weapons program capable of producing 4,500 tons of poisons per year, and already has thousands of pounds of nerve agents stockpiled. The Sosan's voyage comes at a time when Pyongyang and Washington have been increasingly at odds over the North's ramping up of its nuclear program, which had been frozen under a 1994 agreement in exchange for western economic aid.**

Source: <http://www.washtimes.com/upi-breaking/20030218-054117-9697r.htm>

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

7. *February 19, New York Times* — **Packing meals for the troops.** In this Kentucky city along the Ohio River, production of the new M.R.E.'s has surged to four times the usual rate, as clear a sign as any of President Bush's preparations for war and of the Pentagon's aspirations to make soldiers' field rations morale-boosting, performance-enhancing weapons of mass satisfaction. **Since January, food-processing contractors in South Carolina, Texas and here, at the Ameriquel Group, have been packing a total of four million M.R.E.'s a month. Troops in Iraq would get plenty of conventional chow-line meals, too, but on the battlefield, M.R.E.'s are their breakfast, lunch and dinner.** Each pouch contains 1,200 calories, and three fulfill the typical soldier's daily need. Thanks to advances in food processing technology and the Pentagon's concern with how the gulf war rations were ridiculed, this time there are 24 menus, twice the number served in the gulf war. And the meals can be warmed up too, thanks to the heating element. "Military personnel who establish a strong nutritional status will better endure the harsh environment encountered in today's battlefield," according to a military operations guide prepared by researchers at the Defense Department's food research center in Natick, MA.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/19/politics/19MEAL.html>

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Banking and Finance Sector

8. *February 18, San Diego Daily Transcript* — **Protecting employees from identity theft.** As the frequency of identity theft rises, business officials are learning to guard employee information or be liable for thefts that occur. Last year, Dan Bacalski of Bacalski, Byrne, Koska & Ottoson, struck a confidential settlement with Sorrento Valley's Ligand Pharmaceuticals Inc. on behalf of 14 former employees. **The group sued Ligand for negligence after a lab assistant sold information collected from the personnel records of a number of former employees to other thieves. Using this information, thieves netted 75 credit cards, 20 cellular phones, three apartments and \$100,000 in merchandise. The lab assistant, Roxanne Charlton, was eventually convicted for her crimes. The financial details of the Ligand settlement are confidential.** Bacalski, who also counsels businesses on how to protect employee information, predicted that companies will be more responsible in the future. "I think the overall number of incidents will reduce, but the gravity of damages will be greater" because of the toll the identity theft takes on people's lives, he said. **Jay Foley, director of consumer and victim services for the San Diego-based Identity Theft Resource Center, said business owners must seriously evaluate the need to collect a social security number from customers. And if they do, they should ensure this information is handled by a trusted employee and stored properly.**
Source: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story_8t.html

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Transportation Sector

9. *February 20, CNN* — **Mountain search after Iran crash Bad weather seen as most likely cause. Mountain climbers joined rescue workers on Thursday to scour snow-capped peaks for the remains of 302 elite troops and aircrew killed in the country's worst ever air disaster, official media said.** The military plane crashed Wednesday night in southeastern Iran, officials said. It was one of the highest death tolls in aviation history, and no official explanation for the crash was immediately given. **However, Ali Moradi Haqiqi, police chief of the Sistan-Baluchestan province, said the crash occurred in a mountainous region in bad weather, about 20 miles short of the Kerman airport. State media said the Russian-built Ilyushin aircraft took off from Zahedan, near Iran's border with Pakistan.** Journalist Thomas Loudon of Dutch Radio Television told CNN that heavy snow was preventing recovery of bodies from the scene, though parts of the plane itself had been found. State television said teams of mountain climbers had joined Red Crescent workers to tackle the difficult terrain where the crash occurred in the Siraj mountains close to the city of Kerman, 1,075 km (670 miles) southeast of Tehran. Formed shortly after the 1979 Islamic revolution inspired by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the Revolutionary Guards force is independent of Iran's regular army and played a key role in the 1980–1988 Iran–Iraq war. Mahmoud Ahmadi, an Iranian journalist, told CNN the Iranian Cabinet has issued a message of condolence to the families of those killed in the crash, which was the latest in a series of aviation disasters in Iran, most of which involved Russian-designed aircraft.
Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/02/20/iran.crash/>

10. *February 19, Los Angeles Times* — **Overseas flights leave U.S. vulnerable.** Billions in taxpayer dollars and swarms of federal screeners have made U.S. airports harder for terrorists to hit, **but passenger jets bound for America remain vulnerable overseas because of gaps in global security, industry and government officials say.** "There are hundreds and hundreds of

examples of gaping holes in foreign security," said Capt. Steve Luckey, security chairman for the Air Line Pilots Assn. "There is nothing out there to negate a recurrence of 9/11, provided [terrorists] do it at the end of the flight instead of the beginning." Perfunctory passenger screening at U.S. airports has been replaced by close inspection under the federal Transportation Security Administration. **One unintended result may be to displace the threat, making it more tempting to attack American aviation at less secure airports overseas.** Under international agreements, all nations must provide basic screening of passengers and luggage. In practice, there is no uniform level of security. European countries, Canada and Japan have beefed up airport security since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. Yet many poorer countries cannot afford to do it.

Source: <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-threat19feb19001433.1.2653692.story?coll=la%2Dheadlines%2Dnation>

11. *February 19, Washington Post* — **Police searching cars at random outside airports. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) instructed local police on Feb. 8 to begin random searches of vehicles approaching airport terminals "in response to threats and intelligence information" it received.** In the past, the agency has required some airports to search vehicles at parking lots or garages near terminals, but it has never before ordered random checks at arrival and departure curbs. Some airport managers balked at following the directive until the TSA clarified the legal issues. In its defense, the agency pointed to several cases in which federal courts ruled that vehicles could be searched for reasons of public safety. **Now police at most airports are randomly inspecting cars and trucks that drop off or pick up passengers. They also are searching delivery trucks and other vehicles entering the airport.** At some airports, such as Los Angeles International and Dallas–Fort Worth International, police have set up a presence similar to a sobriety checkpoint or a border crossing, where tens of thousands of drivers are told to slow down and officers visually inspect cars, waving some through and motioning others to pull over for a search.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A27518-2003Feb 18.html>

12. *February 19, Washington Post* — **CSX worries stopped area passenger trains.** CSX Transportation, a major Eastern freight railroad whose tracks are used by many commuter and Amtrak passenger trains, was largely shut down in the Mid–Atlantic region by the weekend snowstorm, **prompting Virginia Railway Express (VRE) to question whether CSX was adequately prepared.** CSX said it refused to let the passenger and commuter trains operate because it was the safe thing to do. It promised to resume "near normal" service in the Washington area by Thursday or Friday. Commuter and passenger trains generally run over freight railroads' tracks, except between Boston and Washington. VRE, for example, uses Norfolk Southern tracks from Manassas to Alexandria and CSX tracks from Fredericksburg to Washington. All VRE trains, therefore, use CSX tracks between Alexandria and Washington. **A CSX spokesman said maintenance manpower was stretched to the limit and would not have been able to go to the aid of stranded passenger trains, he said. Even in the seven miles from Alexandria to Union Station, CSX did not want to take a chance that a passenger train would be stranded,** said Jay S. Westbrook, CSX assistant vice president for passenger and operations planning.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A27847-2003Feb 18.html>

13.

February 18, Transportation Security Administration — **Transportation Security Administration joins U.S. Customs, Coast Guard, Maritime Administration and state, local officials in securing ports, cargo.** Nearly \$8.5 million in Transportation Security Administration (TSA) grants to Texas ports includes money for risk assessments, command facilities and other projects that will help local officials foil terrorism, TSA said Tuesday at a news conference at the Port of Houston. George Rodriguez, Director of Cargo Security, said those grants also contribute to laying the foundation for ports to continually make improvements and to employ new security technologies. **The Port of Houston** – the nation's largest in terms of foreign trade and second largest in tonnage – **received a \$1.5 million grant for a new command and control center that local, state and federal agencies can also use to monitor and control emergencies ranging from hurricanes to terrorist attacks.** The center is being modeled after facilities at Johnson Space Center, and the port and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration are exploring how to provide backup to each other should one of them be disabled. **The port also received a \$300,000 grant for a risk assessment.** Eight other ports or companies in Texas have received TSA grants for risk assessments and for projects that include new surveillance systems, lighting, command facilities, cameras, fencing, electronic detection equipment and access control.
Source: <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/tsa1203.htm>

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Postal and Shipping Sector

14. *February 20, New Zealand News* — **U.S. tracks deadly cargoes . Three giant cargo ships are being tracked by United States and British intelligence on suspicion that they might be carrying Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. Each with a deadweight of 35,000 to 40,000 tons, the ships have been sailing around the world's oceans for the past three months while maintaining radio silence in clear violation of international maritime law, say authoritative shipping industry sources.** The vessels left port in late November, just a few days after UN weapons inspectors led by Hans Blix began their search for the alleged Iraqi arsenal on their return to the country. **The ships were chartered by a shipping agent based in Egypt and are flying under the flags of three countries. The continued radio silence since they left port, in addition to the captains' failure to provide information on their cargoes or their destinations, is a breach of international maritime laws. The vessels are thought to have spent much of their time in the deep waters of the Indian Ocean, berthing at sea when they need to collect supplies of fuel and food. They have berthed in a handful of Arab countries, including Yemen. American and British military forces are believed to be reluctant to stop and search the vessels for fear that any intervention might result in them being scuttled. If they were carrying chemical and biological weapons, or fissile nuclear material, and they were to be sunk at sea, the environmental damage could be catastrophic.** A shipping industry source said: "If Iraq does have weapons of mass destruction, then a very large part of its capability could be afloat on the high seas right now. These ships have maintained radio silence for long periods and, for a considerable time, they have been steaming around in ever-decreasing circles."
Source: <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storydisplay.cfm?storyID=3147262&thesec=news&rd>

15.

February 20, Shipping Times — **Tighter security measures in place at Malaysian ports.**

Malaysian Transport Minister Ling Liong Sik said Malaysian ports are safe from any smuggling activities, including weapons by terrorists, as security measures have been tightened up. He said the tighter security measures, imposed following the Sept 11 attack in the U.S., were to ensure that Malaysia was safe from any terrorist activities. **The ports had been installed with scanners to enhance security to the satisfaction of foreign countries including the U.S., he said.** Dr Ling was speaking to reporters on Tuesday after opening the 4th International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH) Asia Regional Meeting in Penang. Dr Ling said the Malaysian Customs had also signed an agreement with the U.S. Customs to start the implementation of the Container Security Initiative (CSI). **He said that discussions between the two countries' departments were on-going to implement CSI at Port Klang and Tanjung Pelepas Port.**

Source: http://business-times.asia1.com.sg/sub/shippingtimes/story/0_4574.73189.00.html?

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Agriculture Sector

16. *February 19, Ledger* — **Canker found in DeSoto. State inspectors have discovered citrus canker in a DeSoto County grapefruit grove, according to a statement released Monday by the Florida Division of Plant Industry.** The 16-acre grove is south of U.S. 70 and southeast of the current quarantine area in the county. Canker is a bacterial disease that leaves lesions on citrus trees and fruit. It can weaken the trees and lower fruit production, but it does not kill the tree. **The bacteria is harmless to humans and animals, but unwholesome appearance of the lesions makes it impossible to sell the citrus as fresh fruit.**

Source: <http://www.theledger.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?Site=LL20030219&No=302190335001&SectionCat=BUSINESS>

17. *February 19, Western Producer* — **Researchers still chasing Johne's disease. The incidence of Johne's disease in American cattle is probably worse than previously thought.** "This is not a disease we can readily test for and clean up in a herd," said Michael Carter, a veterinarian with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) who described the level of surveillance to an animal health subcommittee on January, 30 during the National Cattlemen's Beef Association convention in Nashville. U.S. animal health officials expect the results of a national study on the prevalence of this wasting disease later this year. **A voluntary bovine Johne's disease program exists in a number of states. Progress in each state varies from advanced surveillance to minimal activity.** Forty-one states have established advisory councils and about half have control programs. Most are working on establishing accredited labs capable of diagnosing the disease. **The USDA wants to create disease-reporting procedures similar to what is already used for tuberculosis and brucellosis. This includes consistent reporting and categorization of the incidence of diseases.** Improved lab tests can detect the disease sooner, proving that some beef and dairy herds that appear healthy are shedding the bacteria. Donald Lein of New York state's animal diagnostic laboratory said they have been testing for Johne's since 1985. Today's improved equipment has found the disease is more prevalent than earlier believed.

Source: <http://www.producer.com/articles/20030213/livestock/20030213ls01e.html>

18. *February 19, Salt Lake Tribune* — **Wasting disease hits Utah. Biologists have found chronic wasting disease (CWD) in a sample from a mule deer buck taken this fall on Diamond Mountain, north of Vernal in northeast Utah, officials confirmed Tuesday.** Utah wildlife officials had tested for CWD since 1998, and ramped up testing for CWD this fall after it was discovered nearby in Colorado and Wyoming. Division of Wildlife Resources workers sawed into the skulls of 1,500 deer and elk this year and had cleared 1,400 when a suspect animal sample was sent for final testing in Iowa. It came back Tuesday. **Utah officials will aggressively expand testing.**

Source: <http://www.sltrib.com/2003/Feb/02192003/utah/30836.asp>

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Food Sector

Nothing to report.

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Water Sector

19. *February 19, Rocky Mountain News* — **Reservoirs could drop to 80% empty. In Colorado, Denver Water reservoir levels could fall to 20 percent of normal by April 2004 unless the region's residents step up conservation efforts this summer. Last spring, Denver's reservoirs stood at 79 percent full. They're expected to drop to 40 percent by April 1 of this year.** "We drew down half our storage supplies last year," said Andrew Wallach, a Denver Water Board member. If the same scenario plays out again this summer, "we'll be at 20 percent by April of 2004," Wallach said, at a Tuesday briefing on proposed water restrictions before the Denver City Council. **Denver Water is Colorado's largest municipal water provider, supplying 1.2 million metro area residents. It also has one of the largest water-storage systems in the state, a system that can store more than 600,000 acre feet of water, a nearly three-year supply under normal conditions. But in the midst of the worst drought of the past 100 years, cities are going through stored water supplies at record rates. Aurora, Colorado's reservoirs, to cite one dramatic example, are already nearing that 20 percent mark.** With little hope that spring snows will provide sufficient new water, Aurora announced last week that new lawns and gardens will be banned starting May 3. The city said it may have enough water to irrigate existing vegetation, but not new plants. Denver Water hopes it can avoid the measures imposed by Aurora both this year and next, but it all depends on how much water is saved this summer, Wallach said.

Source: http://www.insidedenver.com/drmn/local/article/0.1299.DRMN_15_1754616.00.html

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Public Health Sector

20. *February 19, Associated Press* — **Overuse cited in Cipro ineffectiveness. Cipro, the antibiotic that became a household word during the 2001 anthrax scare, is becoming increasingly ineffective against other dangerous germs because of overuse, a study found.**

The researchers examined data on infections in hospitalized patients in 43 states and Washington, D.C., from 1994 to 2000. Ailments included respiratory and urinary infections caused by a variety of bacteria. Many germs had grown resistant to fluoroquinolones, a class of antibiotics that includes ciprofloxacin, known by the brand name Cipro. **In 1994, Cipro was effective against 86 percent of the bacteria samples analyzed, but that dropped to 76 percent by 2000, the researchers found.** The anthrax bacterium was not studied, and the researchers said their findings do not mean that Cipro is becoming less effective against anthrax.

Source: http://www.sunherald.com/mld/sunherald/news/breaking_news/52_14727.htm

21. *February 19, News Channel 5* — **Strange particles found in Ohio blood supply. The Red Cross says mysterious white, fibrous, clumpy material has turned up in seven units of central Ohio blood.** The blood has been discarded. Nobody has been able to determine what the material is, not the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration, or the Red Cross. But the quality director for the Central Ohio Region of the Red Cross, Rita Barnes, said the material is not infectious. **Barnes said the CDC has ruled out bioterrorism and various bacteria, viruses, and fungi.** Blood collection workers and hospitals that use their products have been keeping a close watch since January after 65 bags of blood in Georgia were found to be contaminated.

Source: <http://www.newsnet5.com/health/1989809/detail.html>

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Government Sector

22. *February 19, Associated Press* — **Ridge announces terror readiness plan.** Telling Americans to be ready for terrorist attacks, Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge launched a public-relations campaign Wednesday that offers families a few basic steps to prepare for the worst. **The message: Have a communications plan so the family can get in touch during an emergency; put together a disaster kit with a few days of critical supplies, and know where to turn for information during a crisis.** "We will not be afraid. We will be ready," said Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, who traveled to Cincinnati to announce the program and meet with safety and emergency workers at the local Red Cross. "Make a kit! Have a plan! Get informed!" he said. **Homeland Security officials said the campaign launch has been a year in the making and not tied to the orange – "High" – terrorism alert that began more than a week ago. Officials said they crafted the campaign to avoid scaring people while providing some commonsense ideas that will help families find and care for each other when normal government and emergency services aren't available.** Many of these steps are worth taking to prepare for natural disasters, as well, officials said.

Source: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story_p_on_go_ca_st_pe/homeland_security

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Emergency Services Sector

23.

February 19, Associated Press — **War deployments drain police departments.** The call-up of military reservists for duty in Afghanistan, for homeland security and to prepare for a possible war against Iraq has strained police and sheriff departments nationwide. **The Washington, D.C.-based Police Executive Research Forum says 44 percent of 976 law enforcement agencies it surveyed between September and November reported losing personnel to reservist duty.** "It's not a problem that has a really easy answer," said Jim Pasco, executive director of the National Fraternal Order of Police. **To make up for missing officers, sheriffs and police chiefs have been forced to pay more overtime, transfer officers to ensure essential services are covered, borrow officers from other agencies, and speed up plans to put volunteers on the streets.** For example, the 44-officer police department in Martinsburg, W.VA, lost four officers to military duty in 2001, prompting two Navy recruiters to patrol the streets as volunteers. "It was 10 percent of the department," said Chief Ted Anderson. "I had to work the other guys longer. It set us back."

Source: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story_p_on_re_us/police_call_ups_4

24. *February 19, Providence Journal* — **State gives high marks for terrorism response.** Rhode Island needs to create a common radio system that would allow police and fire crews from different communities to communicate during a disaster and it needs to decontaminate victims of a chemical attack with more speed. But overall, the state is prepared to deal with a major terrorist attack. **Those are some of the findings after a statewide terrorism exercise that were announced on Tuesday by Lt. Gov. Charles J. Fogarty, who chairs the state's Emergency Management Council.** As part of the drill last June, police, fire, and medical crews from around the state converged on T.F. Green Airport to deal with a simulated chemical attack on airplane passengers. **The airport drill, coupled with an exercise at the Naval War College last March, were designed to test the state's readiness to deal with a terrorist attack.**

Source: http://www.projo.com/news/content/projo_20030219_terror19.93_1a2.html

25. *February 19, MaineToday.com* — **State officials say that \$25M is needed to fund training.** Maine needs another \$25 million solely for training emergency personnel to be prepared for a potential terrorist attack, state emergency management officials told U.S. Sen. Olympia Snowe on Tuesday. **During a briefing at Camp Keyes, officials reiterated their long-held concerns about the state's lack of trained emergency response personnel and lobbied the Republican senator for unrestricted federal funding that would let police and fire departments pay the overtime costs to conduct emergency response training for more than 16,000 employees.** Federal funding so far has come with the restriction that it be used only for purchasing equipment, such as hazardous material suits, and not for the training to use that equipment properly, they said. **Congress recently appropriated \$3.6 billion to state and local authorities for security – from which the director of Maine's Emergency Management Agency, Art Cleaves, said he hopes to receive the \$25 million – but it has not earmarked any of the money for training.** That means Maine's emergency response personnel may receive even more equipment they are not trained to use. "After a preliminary look at the money coming through this year, I didn't see any training money," Cleaves said. "We need flexibility in funding."



Source: http://www.centralmaine.com/news/stories/030219snowe_a1.shtml

Information and Telecommunications Sector

26. *February 19, Government Computer News* — States take first step toward cyberthreat sharing. Last weekend thirteen states conducted a communications exercise that could lead to a new, multistate information sharing and analysis center (ISAC). The ISAC, which would pool cyberthreat data gathered by states, is led by William Pelgrin, director of the New York City Office of Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure. No formal center exists yet, however. During the dry run, **participating states reported to a central location any suspicious activities they monitored on the Internet over the Presidents Day weekend.** "There was no malicious activity," said Mike Russo, chief information security officer in Florida's state technology office. "The exercise was about the communications and working relationships with the other states." **Because sharing information about security threats and vulnerabilities is seen as essential to protect the nation's critical infrastructures, the federal government has encouraged the creation of ISACs to share information in commercial sectors such as banking, public utilities and IT.** It also encourages information sharing with federal agencies. The **ISACs serve as central collection points where data can be gathered and evaluated.** Most such information is sanitized before distribution because of participating organizations' liability concerns.

Source: http://www.gcn.com/vol1_no1/daily-updates/21169-1.html

Internet Alert Dashboard

Current Alert Levels	
 AlertCon: 1 out of 4 https://gtoc.iss.net	 Security Focus ThreatCon: 1 out of 4 www.securityfocus.com
Current Virus and Port Attacks	
Virus:	#1 Virus in the United States: WORM_KLEZ.H Source: http://wtc.trendmicro.com/wtc/wmap.html , Trend World Micro Virus Tracking Center [Infected Computers, North America, Past 24 hours, #1 in United States]
Top 10 Target Ports	137 (netbios-ns), 80 (www), 1434 (ms-sql-m), 113 (ident), 4662 (eDonkey2000), 445 (microsoft-ds), 6346 (gnutella-svc), 139 (netbios-ssn), 1619 (xs-openstorage), 25 (smtp) Source: http://isc.incidents.org/top10.html ; Internet Storm Center

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General Sector

27. *February 19, Associated Press* — **Sept. 11 suspect convicted of accessory to murder.** A Moroccan student was convicted Wednesday of more than 3,000 counts of accessory to murder in the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States, ending the first trial of anyone connected with the suicide hijackings. **Mounir el Motassadeq, 28, was sentenced to the maximum 15 years in prison for helping the Hamburg-based al Qaeda terror cell that included lead hijacker Mohamed Atta and two other suicide pilots. In addition to the 3,045 counts of accessory to murder, he was convicted of five counts of attempted murder and bodily injury.** El Motassadeq has acknowledged knowing six other alleged members of the Hamburg cell – Atta and two other suicide pilots, Ziad Jarrah and Marwan al-Shehhi; and organizers Ramzi Binalshibh, Said Bahaji and Zakariya Essabar. But he says he knew nothing of their plans. **But witnesses testified that el Motassadeq, a slight, bearded man, was as radical as the rest of the group, talking of jihad – holy war – and his hatred of Israel and the United States.** The defendant himself admitted he trained in one of Osama bin Laden's camps in Afghanistan in 2000. **The prospect of el Motassadeq's imprisonment in Germany raised security fears even before the verdict. Terrorists might attempt hijackings or kidnappings to free him, said Bavaria's top security official, Interior Minister Guenter Beckstein. The Hamburg case, coupled with a possible Iraq war, has led some German authorities to step up surveillance of likely suspects who might be planning attacks, though there is no evidence of any specific threats for now, Dirk Buechner, spokesman for the Federal Criminal Office, told ZDF television.**

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2003-02-19-germany-terror_x.htm

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NIPC Products & Contact Information

The National Infrastructure Protection Center (NIPC) serves as a national critical infrastructure threat assessment, warning, vulnerability, and law enforcement investigation and response entity. The NIPC provides timely warnings of international threats, comprehensive analysis and law enforcement investigation and response. The NIPC provides a range of bulletins and advisories of interest to information system security and professionals and those involved in protecting public and private infrastructures. By visiting the NIPC web-site (<http://www.nipc.gov>), one can quickly access any of the following NIPC products:

[NIPC Warnings](#) – NIPC Assessments, Advisories, and Alerts: The NIPC produces three levels of infrastructure warnings which are developed and distributed consistent with the FBI's National Threat Warning System. Collectively, these threat warning products will be based on material that is significant, credible, timely, and that address cyber and/or infrastructure dimensions with possibly significant impact.

[NIPC Publications](#) – NIPC Daily Reports, CyberNotes, Information Bulletins, and other publications

[NIPC Daily Reports Archive](#) – Access past NIPC Daily Reports

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